

## ***2022 Greater Lansing Potters Guild -- Committee Annual Reports***

***Chemical Committee:*** We used chemicals, we bought chemicals, we kept the shed semi-organized.

Pamela Timmons, Chair

### ***Clay Committee:***

Clay committee moves at a slow steady pace but this year had some unusual aspects. Because of Covid some clay became hard to get, especially Porcelain so, at the end of last year, we ordered all the porcelain Mid-Michigan clay had. As of today, we still don't know when it will be available again. The porcelain we received, we later found out, had manufacture dates of 2019 and 2020 and it turned out that it is very stiff but usable. Lyn and I have continued to inventory the clay usage monthly.

Usually, Standard would have raised their prices in February so between our order last winter and the recent order in March, we dodged the price hike due to happen in May or June.

Geoff Gamble, Chair

### ***Community/Outreach Committee.***

Empty Bowls for 2021: Guild provided a total of 300 bowls since the previous EB event. This included bowls for sale and bowls for their online auction.

The UU Church of Brighton picked up 5 boxes of seconds and other donated pots for their sale to help fund their social outreach to groups providing social supports in the Brighton area.

The Children's Trust Fund, (a state wide agency promoting the health and safety of Michigan children) requested donations from the Guild. Members provided several pieces of ware for their auction.

Requests for participation seemed to be down this past year, but with more activities coming back, we may anticipate an increase in requests and opportunities for the guild to connect with other organizations.

Liz Meyers, Chair

### ***Education Committee***

To be able to restart the Guild's education program after its suspension In March 2020 due to the covid pandemic, a number of precautions were implemented, for the protection of students, instructors, and Guild members.

1. Students were required to show proof of vaccination. All instructors reported themselves as vaccinated.

2. Windows were opened or cracked to allow for ventilation, weather permitting.
3. Students, instructors, class assistants and lab monitors were required to wear masks in the studio. When demonstrating a technique, instructors were allowed to remove their masks, as long as the students maintained a 6-ft distance.
4. Student access to the studio outside of class was limited to four 3-hour lab sessions: Mondays 12-3 pm, Wednesdays 6:30-9:30, and Saturdays 9-noon and noon-3 pm. In addition, supplemental lab hours were scheduled for the last Sunday prior to the last class.
5. A sign-in policy was implemented for lab hours in case contact-tracing was needed. This provided useful information about the participation in lab hours and the diligence of a subset of students.
6. Clean room policy – students were allowed access, but not for long-term storage of food in the refrigerator. This ended up being a moot point, as the students rarely took breaks due to their limited access to the studio.

Classes were fully subscribed for each term, with 12 students/class, and a list of alternates, which was drawn upon as withdrawals occurred prior to the start of the term.

#### Adjustments in teaching assignments

1. Anne Szilagyi joined the GLPG teaching staff. She was the instructor for the Winter 2022 term's morning class, with Barb Hranilovich serving as the class assistant.
2. Replacements for the other instructor and class assistant for the Winter 2022 term had to be identified a week prior to the beginning of the term, as the assigned personnel withdrew due to concerns about the rise in covid cases due to the omicron variant. Mark Chatterley and Tim Sime were willing to switch from the spring term, and this allowed both morning and evening classes to proceed.
3. Jim Reinert's assistance to the teaching program was especially appreciated, as he stepped in to cover three classes when needed.
4. The instructors who consistently taught the morning or evening classes were asked to teach a class at the alternative time, so that students who lack flexibility about the class time could learn from their instruction.

A few other modifications were made in education policies:

1. Reminder emails were sent weekly regarding lab monitor commitments.
2. Because of the continuing problem of clay being washed down the sink during student clean-up, basins with water for sequential rinsing of the wheel pans were set up near the clay slop tubs for use before prior to a final rinse in the sink. This should have the added benefit of diverting some of the sink traffic at the end of class.
3. The language in the member handbook that states for lab monitors, "This is time for you to do your own work" was replaced with: "Lab monitors should be accessible and helpful to the students."

Barb Sears, Chair

***Finance Committee.***

- GLPG ended the year on sound financial footing. Special thanks to all members who helped to reduce expenditures over the past two years. Our property insurance, property taxes, and federal income tax filings were all submitted in time. A review of the expenditures was completed by Finance Committee members as required.
- Each month, the GLPG Board was provided a Treasurer's Report.
- Upon the creation of a 'Founders Fund' for charitable donations made to the GLPG, the Finance Committee proposed a Gift Acceptance Policy and Proposal for a Standing Committee to oversee expenditures from the Founders Fund.
- A FY2023 Budget was prepared and recommended to the GLPG Board for adoption.
- To give the GLPG better access to an "emergency fund," the Finance Committee elected to close our Certificate of Deposit and use a standard savings account.
- Finance systems upgrade project. The Committee is working to update our financial systems and accounts. We are documenting accounts, passwords, tasks, tax filings, reporting, and timelines for the Treasurer function.
- The reconciliation process on our electric energy usage and costs through Potter Power has been established and we will report on it in the next fiscal year.

#### Notes for Guild Members:

- **New Process for Expense Reimbursements** – Please take a photograph (jpeg) or make a pdf of your expense receipt and attach it to an email requesting reimbursement to [glpgtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:glpgtreasurer@gmail.com). Do not leave any paper copies in the "black deposit box."
- **Dues and Member Assessments – FY 2023** Dues and member assessments are now due. Please pay your dues using the Member Assessment worksheet (provided on the member section of the GLPG Website). The Assessment Worksheet and your payment can be mailed or left in the "black deposit box" on Madhu's shelf.
- **Clay Sales to Students** – Class assistants should put cash/checks for clay purchases by students inside the envelope in the zip-lock bag located in the "black deposit box" on Madhu's shelf. There is a form for you to log the payment. Thank you. We may be upgrading to a non-cash/check system in the future.

Madhu Anderson, Treasurer, and Members Ted Rozeboom, Bill Guerin, and Kevin Fitzgerald

#### ***Gallery Committee.***

The Gallery Committee has had two displays in 2022, no activity in 2021.

Wenfen Pan, Chair

#### ***Glaze Committee.***

The Glaze Committee did not meet again this year due to the reduced Guild activity resulting from Covid. Consequently no changes were made to our batch glazes or to the mixer assignments.

Deb Cole, Chair

***Grounds Committee.***

Much thanks to my helpers. Roger arranged for snowplowing. Tim Simm burned brush, and, he and Chis Iott helped me with the mowing. Liz, Sunny and I worked for half a day pruning back the backyard perimeter bushes as a step toward the goal of having a sculpture garden. Nothing else was done to that end, but it helped facilitate the outdoor sale last summer. I serviced the mower (cleaned air filter, lubricated wheels, changed oil and sharpened the blade). I mowed, trimmed, sprayed weeds, and filled holes in the parking lot, burned brush, got rid of the old picnic table and a dozen pallets, at almost no cost to the Guild.

Tim Candy, Chair

***Long-term Planning Committee.***

The Long-Term Planning Committee met several times over the past year instigated by the deteriorating condition of the car kiln and the need to replace it. We considered several options including rebuilding or repairing the current kiln, purchasing a commercial, automated gas kiln, converting to electric (oxidation) firing, financing and remodeling options, and member preferences to name a few. Discussions were wide-ranging and brought into focus what the Guild's response will be to the climate change crisis that will increasingly impact how and what energy is used in the future in all areas of the economy. The committee developed a report outlining a multi-phase plan that would culminate in the transition to a carbon-free pottery production operation while reducing our carbon footprint along the way. The time frame of this transition was not specified but could be years or even decades.

The first phase proposed by the committee was to rebuild the existing car kiln but incorporate some changes to make it more efficient. The car kiln committee had already embarked on a plan to fire the kiln more efficiently and cost-effectively and a revised firing protocol is now in place. Other measures would include conversion to a forced-air burner system, the use of better-insulating materials and a shorter firing schedule. Donovan Palmquist of Master Kiln Builders provided a quote for the work and the Board approved the rebuilding of the kiln.

To prepare for a more electric-oriented production future, the committee also recommended reconfiguring the burner system of the catenary kiln to create more space for the addition of a second electric kiln in the future. This proposal was also approved by the Board and was part of a revised quote from Donovan.

As the Committee was finalizing the above-mentioned report, the decision was made to replace the electric kiln, which had gone into permanent failure. The report helped inform the Board on the selection of a new kiln that would meet our future firing needs beyond just the ability to handle occasional bisque firings. A Cone Art cone-10 kiln was purchased from Sheffield Pottery and after one false start (the return of a kiln damaged in transport), a new kiln was delivered and installed by our own team of competent workers.

After Board approval of the funds to rebuild the car kiln, an opportunity to apply for capital improvement grant funds came to light and the committee began work, with approval by the Board, to develop a proposal that would provide matching funds for major improvements from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council. With those funds, the Guild could, without spending additional money, also replace the soda kiln which is in an advanced state of deterioration. The deadline for the submission of the grant is June 1, 2022 and the committee continues to work on it.

Finally, the Guild replaced our old refrigerator with an Energy Star rated model, meeting a long-standing committee objective in 2021.

Bill Guerin, Chair

### ***Membership Committee.***

Regarding the work of the Membership Committee during the last year, it has been a time of transition. In practical terms, this has meant working through issues created by the pandemic; the pandemic's effect on the Visiting Potter Program; and the expectations of the existing Visiting Potters and future applicants to the Visiting Potter Program. This was not an easy task and a special thanks to all the members of the Committee who met the challenge head-on with some creative, out-of-the-box thinking.

January 2022, the Committee submitted a white paper to GLPG Board making recommendations to re-open the Visiting Potter Program after being closed for nearly two years. Based on these recommendations, then, our accomplishments during the last year include the following:

February 2022 – The Committee invited all existing First Year Visiting Potters to display their work and to submit applications to become a Second Year VP. The shows were great; the candidates were supportive of the Guild throughout the pandemic; and as a result, we welcomed Sunny, Mike, and YuPing as Second Year Visiting Potters. The Membership Committee also decided to adjust the term of the Second Year Program to start immediately rather than wait until March 1st in order to better assist the Guild in its preparation for the Spring Sale.

March of 2022 – The Committee sponsored Sam's exit show, and based on comments from Guild Members, recommended Sam for membership in the Guild. The Membership Committee also requested, and the Board approved, moving up the Membership's consideration of Sam from the Annual Meeting to a Special Meeting to better assist the Guild in its preparation for the Spring Sale. A Special Meeting of the Members was held on March 27th, and Sam was approved as a Member of the Guild.

The Committee extended the terms of both Kevin and Maureen, and it is anticipated that both will display their work later this year.

Lastly, the Committee also recommended two opportunities for prospective candidates to become Visiting Potters with applications due in August for a September show and applications due in January for the regularly scheduled February show.

With the recommendations outlined in the White Paper, the Guild can make significant progress in creating and maintaining a more stable base of Members and Visiting Potters who better able to achieve our programmatic goals. The Membership Committee also recognizes, however, that in order to attract and target younger members and Visiting Potters, we need to better access our long-term administrative needs and to achieve a better allocation of available tasks and assignments so that younger members and Visiting Potters can manage more effectively the conflicts between and among employment, Guild, and family obligations. The Membership Committee started this discussion last year and expects to continue the discussion in the coming year with further recommendations to the GLBG Board regarding these matters.

Ted Rozeboom, Chair

### ***Photography Committee.***

For the fiscal year 2021 to 2022, the photography committee has taken photos for the publicity of summer sale and winter sale in 2021, created online albums for VP application show and VP exit show in 2022, and taken photos for the web profiles of new members Paul, Tim and Samantha. In addition, 36 portrait photo prints were made for new students, new members and new emeritus members.

Currently the committee has an ongoing project of updating member profiles on the Guild website. So far five members have expressed interest, and photo sessions will be scheduled intermittently throughout the year. Members are welcome and encouraged to update their web profiles.

The committee is also exploring the possibility of setting up a Guild Google Photos account and providing access to the online albums through guild website links. It is our hope that the precious memories preserved in the photos, such as the 50th anniversary events, the VP exit shows, and so on, can be accessed easily and enjoyed whenever.

Sophie Wang, Chair

### ***Sales and Publicity Committee.***

Tilden and Hranilovich co-chaired the Sales Committee this year for the leadership transition. Other members included: Oxeer, Gamble, Hyman, Seebeck, Steinkamp, Nelson, Hamm, Tang, and Wilkinson. We successfully initiated two experimental sales and one "regular" sale, using our website, email blasts, and Facebook for advertising:

- Summer 2021, outside at the Guild: 24 potters participated
- Winter 2021, Clean Room at the Guild: 22 potters participated

- Spring 2022, All Saints Church: 32 potters participated

Wendi Tilden, Chair

### ***Social Committee.***

#### ***Social Media Committee.***

The social media presence on Facebook and Instagram has played an especially crucial part of our guild's communication to the public during the 2021-22 year. With over 2700 Facebook followers and 671 Instagram followers, we were able to bring our Guild closer to the community by posting photos of our work, our potters, and the pottery process to so many in our local area and beyond.

Two post-Covid sales, one outdoors in the summer of 2021, and one in our own studio during the holiday season, were advertised exclusively through social media and through our online presence. Followers have become much more interactive through these means, and many online relationships have been formed with other local art organizations. A big thank you to our members who have been faithful in providing photos of their work, our classes, and guild happenings so that our social media presence can continue throughout the year. Let's keep this momentum going!

Margie Steinkamp, Chair

### ***Bisque Committee.***

#### **Firing Log:**

Catenary Kiln: The Catenary Bisque Kiln was fired approximately 7 times. Several of these firings were due to the lack of having an electric kiln available. Members who might have bisqued at home made it a point to bring in greenware to keep bisque firings moving along.

Electric Kiln: The electric kiln was fired 21 times (old kiln) and 6 times (new kiln) for a total of 27 total electric bisques.

#### **Kiln Repairs/Replacement:**

Catenary kiln: In September 2021, the motor on the back of the catenary kiln failed and a replacement was ordered from Johnson Control; the business to have supplied the guild with the catenary kiln's original motor/fan/schematic for gas, etc. configuration. It was thought the fan vibrated off its post, rubbed on the fan housing and burned out the motor.

Electric kiln: In November 2021, the guild's electric Skutt kiln (purchased in 2005) ceased to function. Tony from Runyan's came to the guild for a repair/analysis in December 2021. Diagnosis showed the electrical connection from the main power source at the kiln control

panel juncture had burned due to an electrical short, rendering the kiln totally non-functional. Due to the potential high cost of repairing the guild's Skutt kiln, the Guild Board made the decision to purchase a new electric kiln.

Upon research done by Bill Guerin, the Guild Board decided to move ahead and order a ConeArt kiln from Sheffield pottery. One factor was that Sheffield had a couple of the desired kilns on order. Due to supply chain issues, alternative ceramic businesses had up to a three month or longer waiting period for a kiln. Additionally the ConeArt appeared to offer the best value and solution to the guild's needs. The kiln package included 8 new shelves and a variety of new stilts.

Delivery of the first ConeArt kiln in February 2022 was denied by the Guild as the kiln was severely damaged upon arrival. The kiln manufacturer in Canada subsequently advised they would build a kiln for the Guild and deliver asap. The second delivery of a kiln took place in March 2022, was accepted, then installed in the Guild's kiln room with the effort of many volunteers.

Several trials of bisque firing have been done in the new electric kiln but a set protocol has not yet been determined. It's looking like we'll continue to bisque to 07 but speed (slow or med-slow) has yet to be determined for general use.

**Bisque overview:** Although a couple catenary kiln bisque firings have been scheduled in the past for weekends, the turnout has been less than stellar for observational purposes. If we are going to continue using the catenary kiln, it would be prudent to have more firers.

Anne Szilagyi, Chair

### ***Website Committee.***

#### **Red Book**

The Red Book edits are almost complete. There is a PDF of the work in progress on the website. As soon as the last edits are provided (one more committee to report) the book can be paginated, the table of contents finalized. At that point the final version will be posted on the website and printed out to replace the one in the clean room.

#### **Website**

Updates are made as required to the website regarding classes, calendars, and sales. The committee recommends that all members review their profiles and images of work to make sure they are current. Some images are very old and still of too low a resolution to show up well. Sophie has offered to take high-quality photos for this purpose. The photos should reflect work that visitors might find at a sale.

Barb Hranilovich, Chair

### ***Workshop Committee.***



No Activity

***Car Kiln Committee.***

As the Guild relaxes Covid restrictions and returns to normal operations, the car kiln has seen more use and more ware is being produced. After only 6 firings in the 2020-21 fiscal year, the 2021-22 fiscal year will have a total of 14 firings with most of those occurring since the resumption of classes in fall, 2021. Although member activity and production is still down considerably from a few years ago, we expect to see a further increase in kiln operations over the next fiscal year.

Participation in the operation and maintenance of the car kiln has been broad among members and VPs alike. All but 6 members have either stacked, lit, fired or un-stacked the kiln or have cleaned the kiln shelves after firing. All VPs actively participated in some aspect of kiln operations. Oversight of the kiln was split this year between Bill Guerin and Chris Iott.

The kiln has now been in operation for almost 25 years and it shows increased signs of deterioration, both in its physical condition and in the results obtained from firings. Due to partial blockage of the flue outlet, it has become difficult to achieve even temperature and atmospheric (reduction) conditions in all areas of the kiln. Coupled with a porous and poorly fitting car door to the face of the kiln, areas of oxidation, under-firing and over-firing are evident in most firings. Even as we deal with these issues, we have instituted a modified firing protocol which is less reduction in an effort to both conserve fuel and to mitigate the occasional breakage of pots due to an over-reduced clay body. Overall, we are still achieving exceptional results with well-standardized firing procedures.

We and the Long-Term Planning Committee are currently in discussions with Donovan Palmquist of Master Kiln Builders to rebuild the kiln and hope to be successful in our application for a capital improvement grant from the Michigan Arts and Culture Council to split the cost of that effort. Tentatively, the kiln rebuild is planned for October of 2022 and will represent a unique opportunity for members and VPs to participate and to learn about kiln design and engineering.

Bill Guerin, Chair

***Low Fire Salt Committee.***

Perhaps when we get back to normal, I'll try once again to interest folks in this firing process.

Pamela Timmons, Chair

***Raku Committee.***

The committee assisted with Raku for the classes. Otherwise, minimal activity.

Tim Candy, Chair

***Soda Committee.***

Five successful soda firings last year, and a new probe for the pyrometer.

Wenfen Pan, Barb Hyman, Chairs